

Amos 5:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in all vineyards shall be wailing: for I will pass through thee, saith the LORD.

Analysis

In all vineyards shall be wailing: for I will pass through thee, saith the LORD (uvekhol-keramim misped ki e'evor beqirbeka amar YHWH, וְכָל־קֶרֶםִים מִסְפֵּד קַיְמָה בְּעֵבֶר בְּקִרְבָּךְ אָמַר יְהָוָה—vineyards were normally places of joy and celebration, associated with harvest festivals, abundance, and gladness (Isaiah 16:10; Jeremiah 48:33). That even vineyards will echo with **wailing** (misped, מִסְפֵּד) shows total reversal—joy transformed into grief.

The phrase **I will pass through thee** (e'evor beqirbeka, אָמַר יְהָוָה בְּקִרְבָּךְ) deliberately echoes Exodus 12:12: "I will pass through the land of Egypt." In Egypt, God passed through in judgment but passed over Israel, sparing them (Exodus 12:23, 27). Now God announces He will pass through Israel—not past them in protection but through them in judgment. The Passover imagery is inverted: once God's judgment struck Israel's enemies while protecting them; now His judgment will strike Israel itself for covenant violation. This is devastating reversal—from protected to punished, from blessed to cursed.

Historical Context

Vineyards represented prosperity and covenant blessing—Israel was God's vineyard (Isaiah 5:1-7). By Amos's time, wealthy landowners had seized vineyards from small farmers (Amos 5:11), making them symbols of oppression rather than blessing. God's judgment would transform these symbols of ill-gotten wealth into

scenes of mourning. When Assyria invaded (722 BC), agricultural devastation accompanied military conquest—exactly as Amos predicted.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does the inversion of Passover imagery (God passing through Israel rather than over them) emphasize the seriousness of covenant violation?
2. In what ways do Christians sometimes presume God's protection while ignoring His call to faithfulness?

Interlinear Text

וְבָכַל	כִּי	מִסְפֵּת	אַעֲבֵר	בְּלֹרֶבֶר
H3605	H3754	H4553	H3588	H5674
And in all vineyards	shall be wailing		for I will pass	through

אַתָּה:	רְאֵמֶר
thee saith	the LORD
H559	H3068

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 12:12 (References Lord): For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

Isaiah 16:10 (Parallel theme): And gladness is taken away, and joy out of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither shall there be shouting: the treading shall tread out no wine in their presses; I have made their vintage shouting to cease.

Jeremiah 48:33 (Parallel theme): And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting.

Exodus 12:23 (References Lord): For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

Zechariah 9:8 (Parallel theme): And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

Nahum 1:12 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD; Though they be quiet, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down, when he shall pass through. Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.

Nahum 1:15 (Parallel theme): Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

Joel 3:17 (References Lord): So shall ye know that I am the LORD your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.